

What is claimed is:

1. A system for acquiring data related to a medical product being administered to a patient, comprising:

an injection device comprising a medical product therein;

5 a microchip attached to the injection device, the microchip comprising non-volatile memory storing product data including at least one of product identification data, manufacturer identification data, lot number data, and product expiration date data associated with the medical product; and

a reader for obtaining the product data from the microchip.

10 2. The system of claim 1, wherein the injection device comprises a syringe, and wherein the microchip is attached to a barrel of the syringe.

15 3. The system of claim 1, further comprising a provider computer coupled to the reader, the provider computer comprising memory for storing the product data obtained by the reader, and an interface for entering individual data related to a patient receiving the medical product, the computer configured for combining the product data and individual data into a tracking file.

20 4. The system of claim 3, further comprising a host computer at a location remote from the provider computer, the host computer and provider computer configured for communicating with one another via an electronic network.

5. The system of claim 4, wherein the host computer comprises a medical product database, the host computer configured for including at least a portion of the tracking file in the medical product database.

5 6. The system of claim 5, wherein the provider computer is configured for periodically transmitting at least a portion of individual data and associated medical product data in tracking files in the memory of the provider computer to the host computer.

7. The system of claim 6, wherein the individual data transmitted by the provider computer excludes personal information capable of identifying respective patients.

8. The system of claim 6, wherein the individual data comprises demographic data of patients received respective medical products.

9. The system of claim 6, wherein the provider computer is configured for transmitting the at least a portion of the individual data and associated medical product data upon being queried by the host computer.

10. The system of claim 1, further comprising a manufacturer computer configured for downloading product data to the microchip.

11. A system for acquiring data related to a medical product being administered to a patient, comprising:

a container comprising a medical product therein;

a read/write communications device attached to the container, the read/write device comprising product data including at least one of product identification data, manufacturer identification data, lot number data, and product expiration date data associated with the medical product; and

a reader for obtaining the product data from read/write communications device.

12. The system of claim 11, wherein the read-write communications device comprises microchip comprising non-volatile memory storing the product data.

13. The system of claim 11, further comprising a writer for transferring the product data to the read/write communications device.

14. The system of claim 11, wherein the container comprises a unit dose container comprising a dosage of the medical product for administration to only one individual.

15. A method for acquiring data related to a medical product being administered to a patient, the method comprising:

attaching a communications device to product packaging for the medical product, the communications device comprising non-volatile memory;

downloading product data to the communications device, the product data comprising at least one of product identification data, manufacturer identification data, lot number data, and product expiration date data;

shipping the medical product for delivery to a provider; and  
receiving individual data related to individual patients receiving the medical product, the  
individual data originating from the provider.

5           16.     The method of claim 15, wherein the individual data comprises demographic data  
associated with respective individual patients.

17.     The method of claim 15, wherein the individual data excludes personal  
information capable of identifying respective individual patients.

18.     The method of claim 15, wherein the product packaging comprises at least one of  
a container comprising the medical product therein, and an injection device comprising the  
medical product therein.

19.     The method of claim 15, further comprising uploading the product data at a  
provider's location; and administering the medical product to an individual.

20       20.     The method of claim 15, further comprising entering individual data related to the  
individual into a tracking file, and including at least a portion of the product data in the tracking  
file.

21.     A method for acquiring data related to a medical product being administered to a  
patient, comprising:

providing a container comprising a medical product therein, and comprising a communications device storing product data, the product data comprising at least one of product identification data, manufacturer identification data, lot number data, and product expiration date data associated with the medical product;

5       uploading the product data into a tracking file on a provider computer;  
administering the medical product to an individual patient;  
including demographic data associated with the individual patient in the tracking file; and  
transmitting the product data and the demographic data in the tracking file to a location  
remote from the provider computer.

22.     The method of claim 21, wherein the tracking file excludes personal information capable of identifying the individual patient.

23.     The method of claim 21, wherein the transmitting step comprises excluding  
15     personal information capable of identifying the individual patient included in the tracking file from the remote location.

24.     The method of claim 21, wherein the product data and demographic data are  
transmitted to a host computer for inclusion in a medical product database.

20       25.     The method of claim 21, wherein the container comprises an injection device for injecting the medical product into an individual.

26. The method of claim 25, wherein the administering step comprises injecting the medical product into the individual.

27. The method of claim 21, wherein the container and communications device are configured such that the communications device is incapable of being separated from the medical product before administration thereof to an individual patient.

28. The method of claim 21, wherein the demographic data comprises at least one of age data, sex data, race data, and geographic location data associated with the individual patient.

29. A method for tracking administration of a medical product to an individual using a machine-readable communications device, the method comprising:

providing a read/write communications device on a medical product package, the read/write communications device storing product data, the product data comprising at least one of product identification, manufacturer identification, product lot number, manufacturing date, and dosage;

uploading the product data from the read/write communications device to a computerized tracking file at a medical provider location;

entering patient data and administration date data to the tracking file generally at the time of administration of the medical product to an individual; and

transmitting the tracking file to a host computer at a location remote from the medical provider location in a manner that excludes personal information capable of identifying the individual from being accessed by unauthorized persons.

30. The method of claim 29, wherein the tracking file further comprises an administered dose entered generally at a time of administration of the medical product to the individual at the medical provider location.

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31. The method of claim 29, wherein the read/write communications device comprises a magnetic strip attached to the product package.

32. The method of claim 29, wherein the read/write communications device comprises a microprocessor attached to the product package.

33. The method of claim 29, wherein the product package is a vial.

34. The method of claim 29, wherein the product package is a package comprising a plurality of vials.

35. The method of claim 29, wherein the product package is a syringe.